

WEEKLY WIRE

NEWS from East Asia and Pacific

Australia

Scholarly Output

Based on a recent report by the Office of the Chief Scientist, Australian Government, Australia has a relatively high scholarly output in science, producing more than 3 per cent of world scientific publications yet accounting for only about 0.3 per cent of the world's population. Australian published scholarly outputs (including fields other than science) grew at a rate of about 5 per cent a year between 1999 and 2008; this compares with a global growth rate of 2.6 per cent. Growth in Australia's research outputs and their impact has been dominated by growth in internationally collaborative publications: from 2002 to 2010 the number of research publications doubled overall; the number of internationally co-authored publications more than tripled. The landscape of Australian collaboration is, however, changing. Historically strong collaboration with North America and Europe continues, but the greatest growth in collaboration is occurring in emerging areas of scientific strength in Asia. In several fields of research—for example, mathematics, engineering, and chemistry—China is now Australia's strongest collaborative partner. For more information, see http://www.chiefscientist.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/HASReport_Web-Update_200912.pdf

East Asia

Education Systems

Four education systems in East Asia were ranked in the top five in the world, said a report published recently by the Pearson Group. Finland ranked first followed by South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, and Singapore. The quality of teaching and cultural respect for education were key factors propelling these countries into the top five. The United Kingdom was sixth, followed by the Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland and Canada. Thailand, Mexico, Brazil, and Indonesia were the bottom four countries. Researchers looked at the cognitive skills and educational attainment levels of children in 50 countries and territories.

The inaugural Learning Curve report found that teachers mattered greatly. Higher-performing countries recruited top talent to join the profession and trained them throughout their careers. The study also found that respect for teachers was fuelled by a high level of support for education.

Data from the Learning Curve report can be found online at <http://thelearningcurve.pearson.com/>

Korea

Investment of \$316 million in Robot Industry

South Korea's Ministry of Knowledge and Economy (MKE) announced that the government plans to expand the nation's robot industry by more than ten times over the next decade. Under the plan, the MKE plans to allocate 350 billion KRW (USD 316 million) to develop new technologies and industries, as well as commercial robots, to include disaster relief robots and home assistance robots. The source of the material is at <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/news/2012/10/17/0200000000AEN20121017005500320.HTML>

Japan

113th Element

A Japanese research team led by Dr. Kosuke Morita of the RIKEN Nishina Center for Accelerator-based Science, has found new evidence confirming their initial discovery in 2004 of an isotope of the 113th element, paving the way for its listing under a new name in the periodic table. The findings were published in the September 27 English edition of the Journal of the Physical Society of Japan. The source of the article is at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/features/science/T120927003908.htm>